

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 2 and replaces the original sheet with Fig. 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 13, 19-22, 25, 26 and 31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 13, 20, 21, 22, 26 and 31 are amended and claims 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 23 and 24 are cancelled. In particular, support for the amendments to independent claims 1, 21 and 31 can be found in original claims 2, 5 and 6, for example. By this amendment, Fig. 2 has also been amended.

Claims 1-13, 16, 19-26 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, independent claims 1 and 31 have been amended in order to clarify that the honeycomb filter comprises a plurality of partitions. With regard to independent claim 21, Applicants assert that such an amendment is not necessary.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The drawings were objected to and Fig. 2 has been amended to remove reference numeral 32 responsive to the objection. It is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 16, 20-23 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Noguchi et al. (Noguchi), U.S. Patent No. 4,036,180, in view of Gadkaree et al. (Gadkaree), U.S. Patent No. 5,750,026. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 31 call for the reforming catalyst to be carried by the plurality of partitions on the second face on the side of the processed gas flow passage, and the first face of the plurality of partitions on the side of the raw material supply flow passage to be only coated by an inactive material. Independent claim 21 calls for a first face of the soot trapping means to be only coated by an inactive material, and the reforming means to be carried by the soot trapping means on a second face of the soot trapping means. Noguchi and Gadkaree fail to disclose the combination of features.

Noguchi discloses an annular chamber 220 filled with catalyst particles that form a catalyst bed 222 (Fig. 1 and col. 5, lines 44-47). A pair of cylindrical walls 210, 212, the closure plate 216 and a part of the downstream end wall 206 defines the annular chamber 220. Although Noguchi states that an alternative catalyst carrier may include a honeycomb structure, Noguchi fails to provide any disclosure with regard to a first face that is only coated by an inactive material and a second face that carries a reforming catalyst as called for in claims 1, 21 and 31.

Gadkaree discloses a honeycomb structure that is impregnated with activated carbon. A catalyst or a catalyst precursor can be coated onto the surfaces of the honeycomb structure along with the activated carbon (col. 8, lines 1-7). Gadkaree does not disclose how the catalyst is applied to the honeycomb structure other than to state that the catalyst is highly dispersed on the activated carbon coating (col. 10, lines 9 and 10). Because Gadkaree does not explicitly disclose how the catalyst is highly dispersed, Gadkaree also fails to provide any disclosure with regard to the first face that is only coated by an inactive material and a second face that carries a reforming catalyst as called for in claims 1, 21 and 31.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

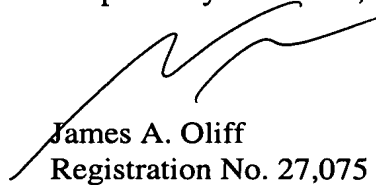
Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Noguchi in view of Gadkaree and Abe et al. (Abe), U.S. Patent No. 6,576,203, claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Noguchi in view of Gadkaree and Jahnke et al. (Jahnke), U.S. Patent No. 6,149,589, and claims 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Noguchi in view of Gadkaree, Hwang et al. (Hwang), U.S. Patent No. 4,522,894, and Doty et al. (Doty), U.S. Patent No. 5,098,455. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Abe, Jahnke, Hwang and Doty fail to overcome the deficiencies of Noguchi and Gadkaree as applied to independent claims 1, 21 and 31. It is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Replacement Sheet

Date: August 14, 2007

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